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Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 FDRE-00 EA-06 OPR-02

A-01 H-02 SCA-01 AID-05 VO-03 SR-02 ORM-01 PA-01

PRS-01 USIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 NSC-05

NSCE-00 /059 W
---------- 111662
O R 301759Z APH 75
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1150
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 0625

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AMG, SREF, GY
SUBJECT: RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

STATE FOR AMB. L. DEAN BROWN

REF: STATE 097854

SUMMARY: INITIAL INFORMAL GOG REACTION RECEPTIVE TO PLIGHT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. MATTER WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CABINET NEXT WEEK, WITH EMPHASIS ON PROFESSIONAL AND ARTISANAL SKILLS. END SUMMARY.

1. I SAW ACTING FONMIN HUBERT JACK 0830 APRIL 30, AND MADE PRESEN-
TATION ALONG LINES REFTEL. HAVING HEARD ON MORNING BBC NEWSCAST
THAT
SAIGON NOW UNDER PRG CONTROL, I EMPHASIZEDUNCERTAINTY OVER NUMBER
REFUGEES EVENTUALLY SEEKING RESETTLEMENT, BUT NOTED USG AIRLIFT

OVER PAST WEEK HAD INCLUDED SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER VIETNAMESE WITH
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HOLDING CAMPS SET UP IN PHILIPPINES AND ON GUAM. I ALSO STRESSED OUR RECOGNITION OF ECONOMIC BURDEN OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT FOR LDC'S LIKE GUYANA, AND SUGGESTED THERE MIGHT BE VIETNAMESE WHO WOULD HELP
FILL SOME OF GUYANA'S SHORTAGES OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, EOMG; DOCTORS, ENGINEERS.

2. MIN JACK, WHOSE REGULAR PORTFOLIO IS ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, SAID WE COULD BE SURE GUYANA IS SYMPATHETIC TO HUMAN TRAGEDY INVOLVED IN DENOUEMENT OF VIETNAMESE CONFLICT. HE ADDED THIS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH POLITICAL ASPECT WHERE,AS I WAS AWARE, GOG HAD FOR SOME TIME GIVENITS SUPPORT TO PRG.
JACK DID NOT BELIEVE IT WAS WORTHWHILE OR GERMANE TO GO INTO FACTORS WHICH CAUSED VIETNAMESE TO BECOME REFUGEES, NOR DID HE BELIEVE PRG WOULD TAKE OFFENSE IF
THOSE WHO HAD SUPPORTED ITS POLITICAL
AIMS NOW OFFERED TO ALLEVIATE REFUGEE PROBLEM.

3. HOWEVER, JACKPOINTED OUT, WHILE GUYANA AS WHOLE IS UNDER-POPULATED, IT HAS ENDEMIC AND SUBSTANTIAL UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM. IN PREVIOUS EXERCISE WHEN GOG ATTEMPTED TO HELP EAST INDIAN REFUGEES FROM UGANDA, LABOR UNIONS INSISTED THAT NO REFUGEE SHOULD BE
ACCOMMODATED WHERE EFFECT WOULD BE TO TAKE A JOB WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD BE FILLED BY GUYANESE WORKER. MOREOVER, GOG SOON FOUND THAT UGANDANPROFESSIONALS (DOCTORS AND ENGINEERS ES-PECIALLY) WERE SIMPLY TURNED OFF BY GUYANA'S AVOWEDLY SOCIALIST ECONOMY. IN END, ONLY TWO UGANDANS ACTUALLY CAME TO GUYANA.

4. I NOTED GOG HAS FOR SOME TIME CONTRACTED SERVICES OF FILIPINO AND S. KOREAN DOCTORS, INDIAN ENGINEERS AND ACCOUNTANTS, ETC. PERHAPS THEY COULD FIND QUALIFIED VIETNAMESE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED
IN TAKING UP NEW LIFE IN GUYANA AT SAME TIME BRINGING SKILLS WHICH IN SHORT SUPPLY. I ADDED MANY VIETNAMESE ARE RICE FARMERS, AND GOG IS TRYING TO EXPAND RICE CULTIVATION.

5. JACK REPLIED THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS MATTER RIGHT AWAY WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN MINISTRIES OF HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE AND WOULD THEN RAISE SUBJECT IN NEXT WEEK'S CABINET MEETING. (WITH PM BURNHAM RE-TURNING FROM COMMONWEALTH HEADS GOVT MEETING JAMAICA ONMAY 6, CABINET WILL MOST LIKELY NOT MEET UNTIL MAY 8.) JACK THOUGHT BEST APPROACH, ASSUMING CABINET APPROVES, WOULD BE FOR GUYANA TO INDI-CONFIDENTIAL

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CATE CATEGORIES OF SKILLS IN SHORT SUPPLY, CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT WOULD AGREE TO ACCEPT REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT, AND A MAXIMUM OVERALL LIMIT. HE NOTED THAT IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURE, GOG WOULD

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WANT NOT ONLY ASSURANCE THAT VIETNAMESE POSSESSED PERTINENT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE, AND WILLING TO ACCEPT QUOTE PIONEER UNQUOTE CONDITIONS OF LIFE BUT ALSO OUTSIDE SUPPORT (FROM UNHCR OR ELSEWHERE) TO COVER COSTS OF RELOCATION AND INITIAL PERIOD OF RESETTLEMENT.

6. JACK ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER FIGURE OF QUOTE MINIMUM OF 100 PER COUNTRY UNQUOTE MEANTINDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES. I SAID IT SEEMED TO REFER TO INDIVIDUALS.

7. COMMENT: THIS WAS MORE FORTHCOMING THAN I WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED, BUT I AM STILL NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT GUYANA WILL ACCEPT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN FINAL ANALYSIS. THE KEY ELEMENT, AS FAR AS GUYANA CONCERNED, WILL BE WHETHER REFUGEES CANPROVIDE PROFESSIONAL
AND ARTISANAL SKILLS NEEDED FOR COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT AND TO CONVINCE GOG THAT REFUGEES ARE GENUINELY PREPARED TO SETTLE HERE FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS.
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TAGS: AEMR, SREF, GY, VS, (JACK, HUBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006